

UNCLASSIFIED

12 September 1983

SUBJECT: Lebanon--Participation in Fighting of Syrian,  
Palestinian, Iranian, and Libyan Forces

[redacted] the Syrians are  
supplying the Druze with ammunition, weapons, and  
intelligence support. [redacted] the  
Syrians have shelled Beirut, [redacted]  
they have encouraged attacks on the MNF. We do not believe,  
however, that they are responsible for shelling the Beirut  
airport. [redacted]  
[redacted] the active participation of Palestinian forces with  
the Druze in the fighting in the Shuf and Alayh districts;  
[redacted] both Libyan and Iranian  
participation.

STAT

STAT

STAT

STAT

STAT

STAT

\* \* \* \* \*

The extent of Syrian involvement is not known precisely. Syrian assistance, however, has doubtless prolonged the struggle in the Shuf. Syria's most important contributions have been delivering military supplies, and permitting the movement of Palestinian, Iranian, and possibly Libyan fighters into the Shuf and Alayh. Syrian ammunition has probably enabled the Druze artillery to maintain the prodigious rate of fire they have kept up throughout the past week. The Syrians may also be providing supporting artillery fire to the Druze. By supplying the Druze in Alayh, and the Shia in Beirut, with weapons and ammunition, the Syrians hope that in renewed rounds of fighting they and their Lebanese allies can mount sufficient pressure on President Gemayel to force him to declare a government of national unity, or to force the fall of his government.

[redacted] the actual participation of Syrian  
commando units in the ground fighting, although we have no  
confirmation of such involvement. It is unlikely that Syrian  
advisers or even a few commandos have had a significant impact on  
the course of the fighting so far, however. [redacted]  
[redacted] Syrian Defense Minister Tlas confirms publicly, that  
the Syrians are prepared to deploy their own troops if the Druze  
appear to be on the verge of defeat. The Syrians have  
established a checkpoint in Bhamdun, about three miles west of  
their previous positions, and a command center the town. Some  
Syrian forces may also have entered the contested Shuf and may  
now be in the Dayr al Qammar area, which is filled with Christian  
refugees.

STAT

STAT

STAT

DESA M# 83.10234

STAT

STAT

( UNCLASSIFIED (

[redacted] Libyan fighters moving to reinforce a Druze position, probably in the contested Alayh area. The Libyans have reportedly also provided Druze leader Junblatt with financial help. A small number of Iranian forces with armored vehicles have deployed in Alayh and the Shuf.

STAT

Palestinian and, most likely, Libyan and Iranian fighters have supported attacks on Druze targets such as Bhamdun and Suq al Gharb. Although these fighters probably number no more than 1,000 men, they have supplemented Druze manpower, enabling the Druze militia to tie down the Lebanese Army near Beirut and at the same time subdue Christian villages in the eastern Shuf and Alayh districts. A variety of Palestinian factions have participated, including moderate Fatah troops, rejectionist, units and anti-Arafat rebels from the Bekaa Valley.

PLO elements retain weapons caches inside Beirut, which are reportedly intended for distribution to Palestinian and Lebanese Muslim fighters in the event that more fighting breaks out in the city. [redacted] PLO elements outside the city are deploying in support of current Druze objectives in the Shuf, with the ultimate objective of reaching Beirut. Indeed, some rebel PLO vehicles have the slogan, "Forces of the Return to Beirut" painted on them.

STAT

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SUBJECT: Lebanon--Participation in Fighting of Syrian,  
Palestinian, Iranian, and Libyan Forces

NESA M#83-10234

DISTRIBUTION:

Orig - DCI  
1 - DDI  
4 - CPAS/IMD/CB  
1 - C/PES  
1 - NIO/NESA  
1 - D/NESA  
2 - NESA/PPS  
1 - NESA/AI  
1 - NESA/AI/I  
2 - NESA/AI/L

DDI/NESA/AI/L/[ ] (12Sep83)

STAT

-3-

UNCLASSIFIED